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The BRAND tourism effect on loyal customer experiences in luxury hotel: The moderating role of psychological ownership

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ABSTRACT

This study applies brand tourism effect to examine the loyal customers' different attitudinal responses caused by two types of non-loyal customers (i.e., brand immigrants and brand tourists) in the luxury hotel industry. The study also investigates the moderating role of psychological ownership on brand tourism effect. Conducting a 2 (types of non-loyal customers) * 2 (psychological ownership) experimental design, the results show that the loyal customers perceive brand tourists more favorably, and their disappointment is the most significantly different emotional response. In addition, the result also finds the moderating effect to be significant, indicating that in a lounge, loyal customers view brand tourists more positively than in restaurant. Lastly, the study also discusses theoretical and practical implications.

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1. Introduction

Imagine a fictitious situation. As a loyal customer in a luxury hotel, you have access to an exclusive fancy lounge. The hotel provides access to the lounge to the limited number of loyal customers and hotel guests who stay in a high-level room such as a suite. Recently, you notice that the lounge becomes overcrowded and noisy because this hotel company has been providing access to the lounge to other guests who hold the affiliated credit card or purchase package deals. You can cope with the different ambience but the lounge does not give you prestigious feelings any more. Interestingly, you may be able to observe two types of non-loyal customers. One type of customer groups takes photos to show they stay in membership lounge or take excessive amount of foods or amenities to obtain maximum benefits. Another group attempts to observe and appreciate this lounge and enjoy while they are staying.

In recent years, the luxury hotel market has grown considerably (Höger, 2018). Advances in the hospitality and tourism industry, an increase in the desire for leisure travel, and an improved standard of living drive the luxury hotel market (Lee & Kim, 2018; Ting, 2016). According to Zion Market Research (2019), the global luxury hotels market was assessed at about 153.82 billion dollars in 2015 and is anticipated to reach around 194.63 billion dollars by 2021, increasing at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of approximately 3.5% between 2016 and 2021. For these reasons, many scholars in the hospitality industry have paid attention to the significant growth of luxury hotels. They often emphasize the consumers' emotional attachment to a particular brand because the luxury hotel market is closely related to hedonic motivation (Hyun & Kim, 2014), status seeking (Yang, Mattila, & Hou, 2013), and customer loyalty (Yang & Lau, 2015).

The repeated loyal customers are critical in terms of financial and brand equity perspectives. According to Ritz Carlton, financially, one loyal customer spends $100,000 for the entire life (Kotler, Bowen, Makens & Baloglu, 2017). In terms of brand equity perspective, loyal customers are very important part of brand equity especially in the service industry (Ou, Verhoef, & Wiesel, 2017). Then, a critical question for luxury hotel is how to maintain the loyal customers. There are many negative factors that make loyal customers switch to other hotels such as the decrease of service quality, inconsistent service, and the negative influence of non-loyal customers that we examined in this study (e.g., Lehto, Park, & Gorden, 2015; Wu, Ai, & Cheng, 2016). In this vein, luxury hotel executives have attempted to increase business by attracting more guests and focusing their efforts on marketing activities, such as providing more benefits (e.g., economic or social benefits).

However, recently, those benefits actually wind up weakening the differentiation between loyal and general customers (Martin, 2015). This is because a hotel's attempt to use these perks to entice general customers such as allowing them to have access to an exclusive area

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through alternative ways such as credit card benefits or package deals (Berger & Heath, 2008; White & Dahl, 2007). These conflicts can largely be explained by the brand tourism effect (Bellenzza & Keinan, 2014), describing a conflict which occurs when non-loyal consumers purchase and utilize luxury items through different ways from loyal customers. In their study, the authors divided non-loyal customers into two different types: brand tourists who are consumers claiming in-group status and brand immigrants who do not claim membership status after they consume the luxury items. To delve deeper into how loyal customers differently perceive non-loyal customers, this study integrated concepts on territorial behavior or territoriality (Brown, 2009; Brown, Lawrence, & Robinson, 2005) related to psychological ownership (Brown, Pierce, & Crossley, 2014; Pierce, Kostova, & Dirks, 2003). Then, we applied it to scenarios in which research respondents perceive infringement and react territorially, depending on their personal level of psychological ownership. For example, when loyal customers access a lounge provided exclusively for loyal consumers, they might experience proprietary feelings about it and develop a strong relationship with that brand of hotel (Peck & Shu, 2009).

This study also aims to help hotel marketers to find some insights on how they can attract new customers and meet their expectations without diluting loyal customers' responses of differentiation from other customers. The followings are the two main purposes of this study: (1) to examine the loyal customers' different responses (emotion, infringement, attitude, and switching intention) that arise when they view brand tourists and brand immigrants; (2) to investigate the moderating role that psychological ownership plays in loyal customers' responses of the two types of non-loyal customers. This research will contribute to the brand marketing literature by offering an insight into how hotel firms manage and operate marketing activity to retain loyal customers. In the background of the executive lounge, by focusing on the traits of non-loyal customers, the study might help hotel executives to improve the hotel's image as well as to mitigate the negativity which might be caused by non-loyal customers.

2. Literature review

2.1. Luxury consumption motivations

To date, many studies have examined personal consumption behavior in various luxury markets, such as the purchase of physical luxury goods (e.g., watches or automobiles; Schade, Hegner, Horstmann, & Brinkmann, 2016; Hung, Huiling, Peng, Hackley, Amy, & Chou, 2011), the purchase of luxury fashion (e.g., handbags, clothes, or shoes; Zhang & Kim, 2013; Giovannini, Xu, & Thomas, 2015), and the consumption of luxury hospitality products and services (Yang & Lau, 2015; Yang, Zhang, & Mattila, 2016). Most previous studies classified luxury consumption motivations as either intrinsic or extrinsic. Truong and McColl (2011) examined consumers' intrinsic motivation for purchasing luxury products. Intrinsically oriented consumers are likely to consider the actual quality of the product and its ability to provide self-directed pleasure. Their purchase also reflects internal self-fulfillment purposes. Another school of thought argues that luxury consumption behavior stems from the well-known concept of conspicuous consumption. Extrinsically motivated consumption tends to consider the importance of others' perceptions, such as what others think about their interaction with the community and society (Kanagaretnam, Mestelman, Nainar, & Shehata, 2009; Wiedmann, Hennigs, & Siebels, 2009). Therefore, extrinsic motivations could be linked to the concept of conspicuous consumption, which states that luxury goods allow customers to show their wealth and status (Veblen, 2017).

In the context of the hospitality industry, Chen and Peng (2018) examined consumers' luxury hotel consumption experiences and their luxury values based on a modified value-attitude-behavior model. The results demonstrated that, unlike tangible luxury goods, hotel services are intangible, so symbolic and experiential values have a direct effect on consumers' behavior. On the other hand, functional value does not have the same effect. This current study examines diverse guests in the luxury hotel environment who are motivated to purchase luxury hotel products and services for different reasons. Likewise, because luxury hotel customers may have various motivations for staying at high-end hotels, this study will examine a variety of customers and the conflicts occurring among them.

2.2. Brand tourism effect

According to recent branding studies, once consumers develop a relationship with a specific brand to establish an identity, they are more likely to share information about a brand with others (Lemy, Goh,& Ferry, 2019; Šerić & Gil-Saura, 2019). This is because the consumers believe that they have participated in the creation and improvement of the value of the brand and are eager to show their feelings of pride in becoming members of a brand community (Decrop & Derbaix, 2010). This phenomenon occurs more frequently in the luxury market because members perceive them as unique and exclusive (Stokburger-Sauer & Teichmann, 2013). For this reason, marketing executives may offer opportunities to non-members who also wish to experience the brand and join the in-group. However, from the loyal customers' perspectives, when they perceive to form a connection with undesirable members, some will lose interest in the in-group because they believe that the brand value has been reduced (Bian & Forsythe, 2012).

Bellezza and Keinan (2014) describe this phenomenon as the “brand tourism effect” by utilizing an analogy between country and brand and the concepts of “brand tourist” and “brand immigrant.” By applying political and sociological perspectives (McLaren & Johnson, 2007), they describe the various situations of immigrants and tourists at a destination and attempt to apply these terms to diverse types of brand customers. They also argue residents may perceive immigrants as a threat and treat them badly because they may be able to take residents' work living in this destination. In the context of the fictitious story above, the brand immigrants are someone who consider themselves as a part of exclusive membership group. As a result, they take the lounge access for granted, and behave as if they are loyal customers who are eligible to enjoy the club lounge.

In contrast to immigrants, residents are more likely to welcome tourists because they spend their money at the destination and leave, and the extent of their spending reflects the destination's economic status (Sharpley, 2014). According to their findings, residents are more likely to have positive attitudes toward tourists than immigrants. Also, residents are able to recognize the economic benefits tourism provides, and that tourism increases residents' pride in their community (Tovar & Lockwood, 2008). When tourists visit their city, residents feel proud of where they live (Alhammad, 2012) and are honored to live in a place with many tourist attractions (Huh & Vogt, 2008). In the context of the story above, brand tourists are someone who don't consider themselves as loyal customers but want to show their admiration for the prestigious membership. Compared to brand immigrants, they appreciate the access to and experiences in the lounge.

This study applies the brand tourism effect to the hospitality industry and it examines the luxury hotel market that offers an exclusive amenity to loyal customers. In addition, based on the definition of the concept, three types of guests were selected and presented: loyal customers, who are officially eligible to use the lounge as a loyal customer; brand immigrants, who have access to the lounge due to inexpensive promotional package deals provided by hotels or affiliated credit card benefits, and who perceive themselves as members of the loyal customers' in-group; and brand tourists, who have access to the lounge due to inexpensive packages, but do not claim to be part of the loyal customers' in-group. Based on this concept, this study assumed that loyal customers' responses are different depending on the two types of non-loyal customers' behaviors and attitudes.

2.3. Emotional responses

As mentioned above, many hotel firms have attempted to provide differentiated products to make loyal customers feel special (Bravo, Martinez, & Pina, 2019). However, if loyal customers believe their rewards or benefits do not serve this purpose, they might experience negative emotions. This study argues that loyal customers have differing perceptions of the two types of non-loyal customers: brand tourists and brand immigrants. In this vein, it is hypothesized that loyal customers might feel a wide range of emotions depending on the non-loyal customers' different behaviors. Based on the background information provided on the concept of brand tourism effect (Bellezza & Keinan, 2014), they might feel pride with regard to the brand tourists, and anger or disappointment in connection with the brand immigrants.

2.3.1. Pride

Pride is derived from satisfaction and fulfillment related to one's achievements and abilities (Hwang & Lee, 2019). Mascolo and Fischer (1995, p. 66) succinctly defined pride as, “an emotion generated by appraisals that one is responsible for a socially valued outcome or for being a socially valued person.” Many marketing scholars have illustrated this sense of pride in various consumption contexts (Pham & Sun, 2020; Septianto, An, Chiew, Paramita, & Tanudharma, 2019). In the context of branding, researchers have found that brand communities of passionate consumers often improve beloved brands such as Apple and Rolex and their loyal customers are more likely to be involved with the brand community (Decrop & Derbaix, 2010; Fournier & Lee, 2009). Based on these prior studies (Cavanaugh, Cutright, Luce, & Bettman, 2011), it seems that loyal customers would feel a sense of pride toward brand tourists, who would reinforce the pride of loyal customers by staying in a luxury hotel that the loyal customers would routinely access as members of a brand community. Hence, the following hypothesis is formulated.

H1: Compared to brand immigrants, brand tourists would cause higher levels of loyal customers' pride in the luxury hotel lounge.

2.3.2. Anger

People normally feel anger when they evaluate an event as annoying and hurtful, and such anger can be directed at another person, a firm, or a situation. According to Averill (1983), anger typically stems from a need to restore equity and justice. This situation usually begins with a perceived misdeed against the wronged party who believes that he or she is responding to an occurrence that was unprovoked and unjustified. In a consumer situation, Casado Diaz and Más Ruíz. (2002) showed the relationship between anger and loyalty in the context of airline industry. Their findings indicated that when a schedule is delayed, customers feel anger and it plays a crucial role in consumer decisions to leave a firm. In the hospitality industry, when loyal customers perceive that the service they received from hotel staff does not differ from that of a non-loyal customer, loyal customers may become angry because they did not perceive differentiation from other customers as loyal customers. In this circumstance, we propose that loyal customers may perceive anger toward non-loyal customers and loyal customers' level of anger could be different depending on the types of non-loyal customers. Therefore, we predict:

H2: Compared to brand tourists, brand immigrants would cause higher levels of loyal customers' anger in the luxury hotel lounge.

2.3.3. Disappointment

Zeelenberg, van Dijk, SR Manstead, and van der Pligt (1998) argued that disappointment is derived from the comparison between an obtained outcome and a better outcome that could have resulted from the same choice. That is, people experience disappointment when the actual service delivery fails to meet their expectations (Zeelenberg & Pieters, 2004), which is likely to lead to goal abandonment (Zeelenberg, van Dijk, Manstead, & van der Pligt, 2000). With regard to disappointment, Zeelenberg et al. (1998) examined the patterns of assessment related to diverse negative emotions such as anger, regret, and disappointment. The result showed that, of many negative emotions, disappointment was highly rated on the dimensions of unexpectedness and circumstantial agency, which can be caused by situations beyond anyone's control. It means that disappointment is more likely to be caused by other-agency than self-agency such as unexpected events or situations (Zeelenberg et al., 2000). In the background of this study, the symbolic value of a luxury hotel can be diluted when undesirable groups begin to use the hotel brand (e.g., when non-loyal customers are perceived as brand immigrants). We hence propose that loyal customers may feel disappointed and give up their preferences for, and stop using, services when these services become associated with undesirable outsiders (e.g., Michalkó, Irimiás, & Timothy, 2015). Based on reviewing the literature, the study formulates following hypothesis.

H3: Compared to brand tourists, brand immigrants would cause higher levels of loyal customers' disappointment in the luxury hotel lounge.

2.4. Infringement

Psychological ownership describes consumers' desire to possess a certain target and territoriality refers to one's attempts to maintain a relationship with a specific target or one's attachment to an object (Brown et al., 2005). In general, individuals are likely to display defensive behavior when perceiving any type of infringement on their territory or possessions. This behavior is more likely to pronounce when possessions are exclusive (Brown, 2009). In a related study, Kirk, Peck, and Swain (2018) distinguish between anticipatory and reactionary defenses. The former is caused by a fear of infringement, resulting in consumers displaying irritation regarding the situation. For example, a distraught consumer may block access to an area, on the false pretext that an adjacent seat is occupied in a coffee shop (Brown, 2009; Griffiths & Gilly, 2012).

On the contrary, where reactionary defenses are concerned, consumers may react defensively in response to a negative event, in which negative emotions are expressed (Kirk et al., 2018). For example, Ashley and Noble (2014) described a circumstance in response to an unsatisfactory experience with a restaurant employee. When closing time comes in restaurant, to show this fact to the custeomrs, employees sometimes behave what could bather customers such as cleaning or turning off the open sign. In this vein, customers might be able to response defensively. Kuppens, Van Mechelen, Smits, and De Boeck (2003) indicated the use of negative emotion such as anger to reclaim territory. For example, in a workplace, when a boss enters a subordinate's area without permission, subordinate may feel infringed and anger if this employee perceives that “the boss thinks he owns everything.”

In the hospitality industry, this concept has been mainly examined in the restaurants. Asatryan and Oh (2008) discovered a relationship between consumer participation in service and a sense of psychological ownership. They measured participation by examining aspects such as expression of favorite service, collaborativeness and leaving active feedback that reflects their experiences. In addition, Ashley and Noble (2014) examine how customer territoriality can be influenced by the relationships between restaurant employees and customers. For example, the closing time cues employees perform before they actually close the restaurant can cause customers to perceive territorial intrusion and can elicit territorial responses from them. The researchers presented diverse cues such as productive cues, withdrawal cues, personal cues, audio/visual cues, hostility cues, and blocking cues. In this way, they found that consumers' identification with the restaurant can amplify the effects of their perception of infringement on their territory. Based on the background of this study, the executive lounge in a hotel, where only loyal customers can have access, might be considered a territory over which loyal customers feel psychological ownership, and thus they may perceive that non-loyal customers are infringing on their

territory. Therefore, the study propose the following hypothesis.

H4: Compared to brand tourists, brand immigrants cause higher levels of infringement of loyal customers.

2.5. Attitude and switching intention

As mentioned above to describe the brand tourism effect, a group conflict occurs because of the limited or exclusive resources, but residents may have different perceptions depending on the distinct behaviors between immigrants and tourists (Dovidio & Esses, 2001). In the context of brand management, Keller (2001) argues that the individuals' attitude toward certain brand users might be considered to be an important component of establishing behavior intention. It means brand users' behaviors might effect observers' beliefs regarding a brand's status and prestige (Jetten, Spears, & Postmes, 2004). In addition, many related studies have revealed the consequence of the situation which might create diverse territorial responses. For example, the situation could increase loyal customers' negative emotions (Brown & Robinson, 2011), lead to abandonment of the territory (Brown et al., 2005), negative word of mouth (Ashley & Noble, 2014) and switching behavior (Kirk et al., 2018). Based on the background of this study, we propose that loyal customers may be able to negatively perceive non-loyal customers, but their attitude toward non-loyal customers and level of switching intention could be different depending on two types of non-loyal customers' different behaviors (i.e., brand immigrants vs. brand tourists). Therefore, we pose the following hypotheses:

H5: Compared to brand immigrants, brand tourists cause more favorable attitudes of loyal customers.

H6: Compared to brand immigrants, brand tourists cause higher levels of switching intention of loyal customers.

2.6. The moderating role of psychological ownership

The concept of psychological ownership can be defined as “the relationship between an individual and an object, in which the object is experienced as having a close connection with the self” (Pierce et al., 2003, p. 86). Pierce et al. (2003) present three important features of psychological ownership. First, this construct illustrates an individual's sense of possessing a material or immaterial object. This feature allows psychological ownership to be differentiated from other concepts, such as organizational commitment and identification (Pierce, Kostova, & Dirks, 2001). Second, psychological ownership involves both a cognitive state such as personal awareness, thought, and belief, and an affective or emotional state. Third, this phenomenon is linked with one's self-concept (Hillenbrand & Money, 2015). According to Pierce et al. (2001), when one owns something, the target of possession becomes bonded with the self.

According to Pierce et al. (2003), people generally magnify their feelings of psychological ownership when their target is viewed favorably. As time goes by, they become familiar not only with their target's basic features but also with the ways that they believe it differs from other objects of the same type. To date, many prior studies have revealed that individuals or groups might feel a sense of psychological ownership for many different targets from tangible materials, including mugs (Shu & Peck, 2011), clothes, restaurant (Kirk et al., 2018) or digital products (Harwood & Garry, 2010) to intangible objects, such as other people (Rudmin & Berry, 1987), ideas (Baer & Brown, 2012), customer-owned cooperatives (Jussila & Tuominen, 2010) or restaurant service (Asatryan & Oh, 2008). The results show that people perceive their feelings of different ownership depending on the condition of the targets and the places.

Brown et al. (2005) state territorial behavior as a result of psychological ownership toward a place or an object. Related studies argue that different levels of psychological ownership might trigger different territorial responses (Shu & Peck, 2011) and create different levels of perceived infringement (Kirk, McSherry, & Swain, 2015). Thus, in this study, in a place where customers feel a high-level of psychological ownership, loyal customers will view non-loyal customers more negatively because infringement can occur. In contrast, in a place where customers feel a low-level of psychological ownership, the relationship between loyal and non-loyal customers weakens. This is because loyal customers are less likely to perceive infringement by non-loyal customers.

Based on prior studies, psychological ownership manifests as an important moderating variable in market place (Kirk et al., 2015). To measure a level of psychological ownership, two different locations were decided by a pilot test with 120 college students. The result confirmed that loyal customers have a higher level of psychological ownership in an executive lounge where only loyal customers are supposed to have access to enter than a restaurant where every customers can enter. We propose that psychological ownership could moderate the relationship between loyal customers and two types of non-loyal customers. Based on these arguments, we develop the following hypotheses.

H7: Psychological ownership (lounge vs. *restaurant) will moderate the brand tourism effects.*

H7a: The brand tourism effect on loyal customers' pride varies depending on different level of psychological ownership (lounge vs. *restauant).*

H7b: The brand tourism effect on loyal customers' anger varies depending on different level of psychological ownership (lounge vs. *restauant).*

H7c: The brand tourism effect on loyal customers' disappointment varies depending on different level of psychological ownership (lounge vs. *restauant).*

H7d: The brand tourism effect on loyal customers'perceived infringement varies depending on different level of psychological ownership (lounge vs. *restauant).*

H7e: The brand tourism effect on loyal customers' attitude varies depending on different level of psychological ownership (lounge vs. *restauant).*

H7f: The brand tourism effect on loyal customers' switching intention varies depending on different level of psychological ownership (lounge vs. *restauant).*

Fig. 1 describes the research framework.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research design

In order to achieve the goal, this study employed a 2 (two types of non-loyal customers: brand immigrants and brand tourists) × 2 (two areas divided by psychological ownership: lounge vs. restaurant) mixed experimental design. Participants were first asked to read an information sheet outlining scenario descriptions, and imagine the situation that the survey presented. Then, they were asked to answer questions regarding their opinions about these two types of non-loyal customers.

3.2. Manipulation

Before the main study, in order to determine if the manipulation of the independent variable has the intended effect, this study attempted to perform a manipulation check in a pretest. Since this study involves instructions and scenarios that explain the situation and background of the study, in the pretest, the questionnaire was about the scenario. Before the pre-test, we checked the review sites and we captured customers' typical behaviors. Then, we asked five luxury loyal consumers to review the scenario and they confirmed a face validity of the scenarios. After this process, we conducted a pre-test to evaluate realism from students. The intention was to check whether brand immigrants and brand tourists can be clearly differentiated. The example question was ‘I felt like the scenario I read was realistic’. In addition, based on psychological ownership, two different locations in the luxury hotel environment are determined: a executive lounge and a restaurant. Observing customer behavior in these two different locations will

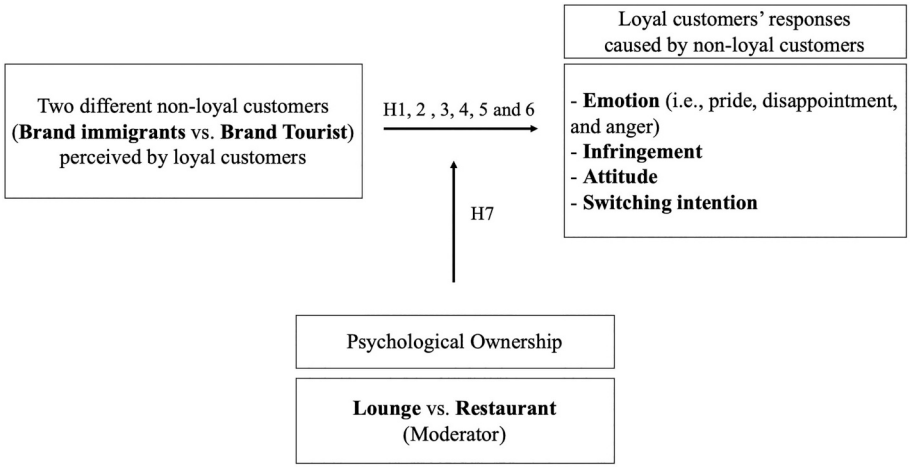

Fig. 1. Research model of brand tourism effect.

reveal the effect of psychological ownership. The pretest examined whether customers can clearly perceive different levels of psychological ownership between the lounge and the restaurant. In pretest, participants were asked to answer the questions regarding manipulation. The example question was 'I felt like the lounge I stayed at was 'my group's own area'.

3.3. Variables measured

When the respondents were ready to begin, they received the instruction, "Please read the following scenario carefully and provide your explanation." Through the description aforementioned, the participants were asked to imagine that they are staying at a luxury hotel and, as a loyal customer, they are eligible to access all of amenities the hotel provides. Then, they were randomly allocated either a scenario presenting the situation in which they see brand immigrants or a scenario presenting the situation in which they see brand tourists (See the Appendix). While they were taking the survey, they were presented with two scenarios: the hotel club lounge and the restaurant in a luxury hotel. The participants were then asked questions designed to gage their perceptions regarding non-loyal customers.

All multi-item variables were adopted from the existing literature and measured using a 7-point Likert scale, which was a relatively common method for reflective constructs in survey research. The questions in the survey were adapted from many prior studies (e.g., Ashley & Noble, 2014; Bellezza & Keinan, 2014; Jang, Cho, & Kim, 2013; Kirmani, Sood, & Bridges, 1999). The three items used to gage emotion (i.e., pride, disappointment, and anger) were derived from Bellezza and Keinan (2014) and Jang et al. (2013) and the three items used to measure infringement were adapted from Ashley and Noble (2014). The three items designed to measure attitude were adapted from Bellezza and Keinan (2014), finally, the three items used to gage loyalty and the three items used for measuring switching intention were adapted from Jang et al. (2013). In this survey questionnaire, in order to suit questions to the background of this study, the items were slightly modified. The questionnaire also included questions designed to gather participants' demographic information including gender, age, income, family structure, and race.

3.4. Data collection and sampling

In the pretest, one hundred and twenty college students in the Midwest area participated to check the realism of the scenario and the manipulation of the study background. After the pretest, in the main study, participants were required to be at least 18 years old and had to be resident in the U.S. Respondents who had stayed at a hotel in the past 12 months were recruited in this study. In addition to these requirements, to recruit appropriate subjects, luxury consumers were recruited. Basically, all respondents had annual household incomes of more than $100,000 and they were familiar with luxury brands and had purchased luxury products. According to Danziger (2011), these consumers can be grouped into two basic categories: "ultra-affluent" consumers, with annual household incomes of more than $250,000 and "high earners not rich yet," with annual household incomes between $100,000 and $249,999.

After the selection process, an online survey company randomly distributed the survey questionnaire to its panel members. Research Now, a well-known online survey company, was used to recruit U.S. adult participants online. Participants recruited by this company were more demographically diverse and represent a closer approximation of the actual U.S. population than standard Internet samples. There were practical advantages to using Research Now in terms of subject anonymity and prescreening, and subjective identifiability. Finally, 1000 adults from an online panel in the United States were selected. After eliminating incomplete responses and outliers, 33 unusable surveys were rejected and 967 remained for data analysis.

3.5. Data screening and analysis

In order to check on normality of the data, the descriptive statistics were examined. Regarding the skewness, Kline (2005) indicated that absolute values higher than 3.0 are extreme, while absolute values greater than 10.0 on the kurtosis index suggest a problem. Values of skewness (0.106 - –0.258) and kurtosis (−0.217 - –0.861) did not violate the normality assumption based on univariate skew (|skewness index| $<$ 3.0) and univariate kurtosis (|kurtosis index| $<$ 10.0; Kline, 2005).This study performed a *t*-test to determine the differences in loyal customers' responses between brand tourists and brand immigrants, and a two-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to examine the interaction effect of different types of non-loyal customers and psychological ownership on loyal customers' responses.

4. Results

4.1. Demographic information

Table 1 displays the distributions of the respondents' demographics and customer profiles. In terms of demographics, the age range of the sample was 18 to 72 years, with approximately 26.6% in the 28–37 age bracket. Gender was almost equally distributed at 48.7% male (n = 471) and 51.3% female (n = 496). The largest percentage of respondents (24.0%) reported a range between $150,000 and $199,999,

Table 1
Demographic and Personal Information.

Item	#	%
Loyalty program (*N* = 967)		
Yes	642	66.4
No	325	33.6
Number of loyalty program involved? (*N* = 642)		
1	247	38.5
2	177	27.6
3	117	18.2
4–5	64	10.0
Greater than 6	16	2.5
Decline to answer	21	3.3
Annual travel frequency with hotel stay (N = 967)		
1	111	11.5
2–3	329	34.0
4–5	247	25.5
6–7	118	12.2
8–9	49	5.1
Greater than 10	113	11.7
Gender (N = 967)		
Male	471	48.7
Female	496	51.3
Age (N = 967)		
18–27	130	13.4
28–37	257	26.6
38–45	164	17.0
46–53	164	17.0
54–62	183	18.9
63–72	69	7.1
Annual income (N = 967)		
100,000–149,999	574	59.4
150,000–199,999	232	24.0
200,000–249,999	65	6.7
250,000–299,999	37	3.8
300,000–349,999	16	1.7
> 350,000	36	3.7
Education background (N = 967)		
High school or less	60	6.2
Some college or associated degree (two-year)	219	22.6
Bachelor (four-year)	387	40.0
(Post) Graduate studies	301	31.1

while the second largest percentage of respondents, approximately 15%, reported an annual household income of between $100,000 and $149,999. In terms of participants' educational background, the largest group was those with bachelor's degrees (40.0%), followed by post-graduate holders and those with post-graduate qualifications (31.1%). In this study, all of the participants had an income greater than $100,000.

4.2. Realism and manipulation check

To ensure the realism of the scenarios, all mean value perceptions of brand immigrants: (M = 5.61, SD = 1.08) and brand tourists (M = 5.31, SD = 1.27) were checked by 120 college students in the Midwest area, and were found to score higher than 5.0 on a seven-point semantic differential scale. The results mean that participants considered the scenarios to be realistic and appropriate for the study. In addition, the participants were also asked to answer how this affects perceived psychological ownership depending on the location (hotel restaurant: M = 3.00, SD = 1.43; hotel lounge (M = 5.07, SD = 1.55). As a result of the t-test (t = 7.061, p < .001), participants significantly confirmed that they perceive higher psychological ownership in a hotel lounge than in a hotel restaurant. This outcome indicated that the scenarios of the restaurant and lounge can be clearly distinguished by psychological ownership.

4.3. Hypothesis testing

This study first examined the brand tourism effect to test H1–6. The average score for each factor was computed and compared between brand immigrant and brand tourist using an independent samples t-test. According to Table 2, research participants' responses (pride (t = −5.07, p < .001), anger (t = 4.79, p < .001), disappointment (t = 5.54, p < .001), infringement (t = 4.85, p < .001), attitude (t = −4.77, p < .001), and switching intention (t = 2.85, p < .01)) are significantly different between brand tourists and brand immigrants. When loyal customers view brand tousits, they rated higher on pride and attitude than brand immigrants, while factors of anger, disappointment, infringement, and switching intention are rated higher on brand immigrant than brand tourists by loyal customers. Based on the result of an independent samples t-test, H1–6 were supported.

In order to examine H7a-f, the study analyzed the data using a two-way MANOVA test, with the types of non-loyal customers and psychological ownership as the independent variables and the loyal customers' different responses (i.e., pride, anger, and disappointment, infringement, attitude, and switching intention) on non-loyal customers as the dependent variables.

As shown in Tables 3 and 4 and Fig. 2 the result of two-way MANOVA for the dimension of pride revealed a significant difference between the two types of non-loyal customers(F (1, 1918) = 25.964, p < .001) and two different backgrounds (F (1, 1918) = 15.717, p < .001). The result also found a significant two-way interaction with psychological ownership (F (1, 1918) = 4.464, p < .01). The result for the feeling of disappointment suggested that the main effect of loyal customers' responses of non-loyal customers (F (1, 1918) = 32.344, p < .001) and psychological ownership (F (1, 1918) = 96.572, p < .001) was significant. This analysis revealed a significant two-way interaction with psychological ownership (F (1, 1918) = 5.268, p < .05).

The second MANOVA results for anger indicated significant differences between the two types of non-loyal customers) (F (1, 1918) = 24.023, p < .001) and the two different backgrounds (F (1, 1918) = 87.260, p < .001). We also found a noteworthy two-way interaction with psychological ownership (F (1, 1918) = 4.933, p < .05). The other result of MANOVA for infringement revealed significant differences between the types of non-loyal customers (F (1, 1918) = 25.680, p < .001) and the two different locations (F (1,

Table 2
The mean differences between immigrants and tourists.

Variables	Type of non-loyal customers		Mean difference	t-value	*p*-value
	Brand immigrant	Brand tourist			
Pride	4.00 (1.55)	4.36 (1.53)	−0.357	−5.07	0.000***
Anger	4.10 (1.73)	3.70 (1.90)	0.398	4.79	0.000***
Disappointment	4.28 (1.74)	3.83 (1.84)	0.454	5.54	0.000***
Infringement	3.90 (1.55)	3.54 (1.69)	0.359	4.85	0.000***
Attitude	4.05 (1.51)	4.37 (1.45)	−0.321	−4.77	0.000***
Switching intention	4.32 (1.46)	4.51 (1.51)	0.194	2.85	0.004**

Note. ** p < .01, *** p < .001.

Table 3
Results of Two-Way MANOVA for Loyal Customers' Emotions (Multivariate Results).

Source	Wilk's	F	p	η2
Intercept	0.064	9310.387	0.000	0.936
Types of non-loyal customers	0.970	19.692	0.000	0.030
Psychological ownership	0.941	39.960	0.000	0.059
Psychological ownership × Types of non-loyal customers	0.995	3.491	0.015	0.005

1918) = 6.342, p < .001). We found a significant two-way interaction with psychological ownership (F (1, 1918) = 41.448, p < .001). Our analysis also revealed an insignificant two-way interaction with psychological ownership (F (1, 1918) = 0.983, p = .322).

The fifth set of MANOVA results for attitude found significant main effects for types of non-loyal customers (F (1, 1918) = 24.902, p < .001) and psychological ownership (F (1, 1918) = 4.025, p < .05). We also found a considerable two-way interaction with psychological ownership (F (1, 1918) = 19.824, p < .001). Lastly, the two-way MANOVA results for the dimension of switching intention revealed that the main effect of types of non-loyal customers (F (1, 1918) = 8.444, p < .01) was noteworthy, while that of psychological ownership (F (1, 1918) = 1.844, p = .175) was insignificant. However, a considerable two-way interaction with psychological ownership was observed (F (1, 1918) = 18.042, p < .001).

5. Conclusion

5.1. Conclusion and discussion

In the hotel industry, the goal of the service providers is to offer the best service to the customers in order to maintain a long-term relationship with them. This is particularly true for those in the luxury hotel business. To do so, hotels attempt to maintain the customer base offering diverse benefits and rewards (e.g., financial and social). However, the case described in this study outlines a scenario where the executives started to open up the exclusive area, where previously only loyal customers could have access, to general guests via diverse promotion deals, many loyal customers began to complain about crowding and hesitated to use the membership lounge. Under this circumstance, this study has attempted to answer the question of how hotel executives provide the best service to every customer without losing their loyal customers and applied concepts of brand tourism effect and psychological ownership. Based on the background of luxury accommodation sector, we applied brand tourism effect.

This study has examined the loyal customers' different responses (i.e., emotion, infringement, attitude, and switching intention) which

Table 4
Two-Way MANOVA Results for Dependent Variables.

Sources	SS	df	MS	F	p	η^2
Pride						
Types of non-loyal customers	61.111	1	61.111	25.964	**0.000*****	0.013
Psychological ownership	36.992	1	36.992	15.717	**0.000*****	0.008
Types of non-loyal customers × Psychological ownership	10.713	1	10.713	4.464	**0.033***	0.002
Error	4514.340	1918	2.354			
Total	38,256.000	1922				
Anger						
Types of non-loyal customers	75.988	1	75.988	24.023	**0.000*****	0.012
Psychological ownership	276.008	1	276.008	87.260	**0.000*****	0.044
Types of non-loyal customers × Psychological ownership	15.603	1	15.603	4.933	**0.026***	0.003
Error	6066.749	1918	3.163			
Total	35,624.000	1922				
Disappointment						
Types of non-loyal customers	98.889	1	98.889	32.344	**0.000*****	0.017
Psychological ownership	295.260	1	295.260	96.572	**0.000*****	0.048
Types of non-loyal customers × Psychological ownership	16.105	1	16.105	5.268	**0.022***	0.003
Error	5864.119	1918	3.057			
Total	37,841.000	1922				

Sources	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p	η^2
Loyal customers' infringement caused by non-loyal customers						
Types of non-loyal customers	65.983	1	65.983	25.680	**0.000*****	0.013
Psychological ownership	16.295	1	16.295	6.345	**0.012***	0.003
Types of non-loyal customers × Psychological ownership	106.498	1	106.498	41.448	**0.000***	0.021
Error	4917.855	1914	2.569			
Total	31,734.556	1918				
Loyal customers' attitude toward non-loyal customers						
Types of non-loyal customers	53.319	1	53.319	24.902	**0.000*****	0.013
Psychological ownership	8.617	1	8.617	4.025	**0.045***	0.002
Types of non-loyal customers × Psychological ownership	42.446	1	42.446	19.824	**0.000*****	0.010
Error	4098.250	1914	2.141			
Total	38,157.778	1918				
Loyal customers' switching intention caused by non-loyal customers						
Types of non-loyal customers	18.544	1	18.544	8.444	**0.004****	0.004
Psychological ownership	4.050	1	4.050	1.844	0.175	0.001
Types of non-loyal customers × Psychological ownership	39.621	1	39.621	18.042	**0.000*****	0.009
Error	4203.206	1914	2.196			
Total	38,524.000	1918				

Note. *p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001.

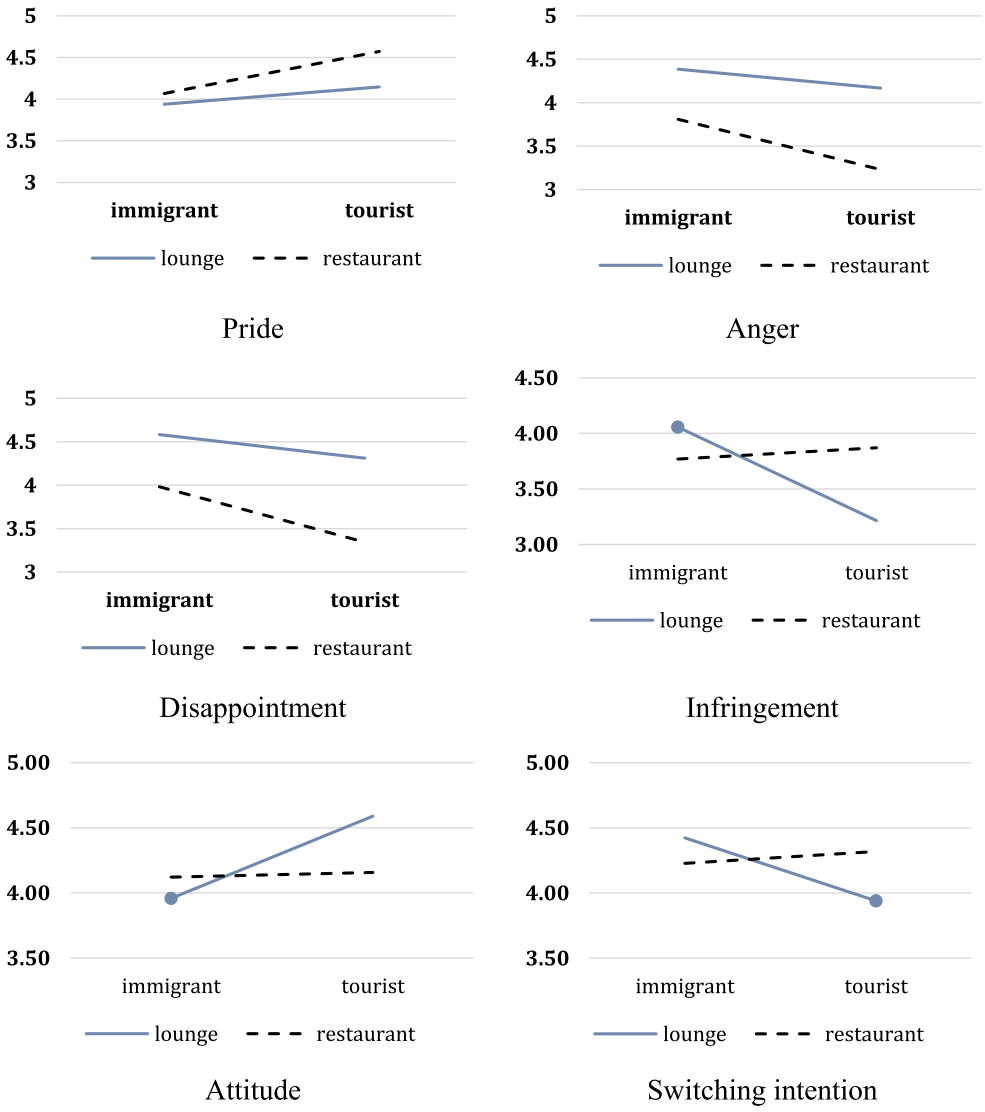

Fig. 2. Interactions of the types of non-loyal customers with psychological ownership.

occur when they perceive non-loyal customers as wither brand tourists or brand immigrants. The research also investigated the moderating role how levels of psychological ownership play in loyal customers' responses of the two types of non-loyal customers (i.e., brand tourists or brand immigrants). The study conducted an experimental design to manipulate the participants by using scenarios recruiting the participants who had hotel experiences in last 12 months and less than $100,000 household income. The result revealed particitipants' significantly different responses between brand immigrants and brand tourists. In addition, we also found the moderating effect to be significant, showing that loyal customers perceive brand tourists more favorably in a lounge than in a restaurant.

Based on the result, this study indicated some points which should be discussed. First, the results of the *t*-test and MANOVA indicate that loyal customers experience significantly different emotions depending on how they view non-loyal customers. Specifically, when non-loyal customers are perceived as brand immigrants, loyal customers are more likely to feel negative emotions including anger and disappointment; however, when loyal customers view them as brand tourists, they tend to feel positive emotions such as pride. Loyal customers felt higher levels of anger and disappointment toward non-loyal customers in the lounge than the restaurant, while they felt higher levels of pride toward brand tourists in both areas, the restaurant and the lounge. In addition, the outcome also shows that the differences between brand immigrant and brand tourist and between a lounge and a restaurant are shown to be greater in negative emotions such as anger and disappointment than in positive emotions such as pride. This outcome implies that wealthy people are likely to show their negative emotion more clearly. From this result, it can be stated that loyal customers' behaviors and perceptions indicate a snob effect and that feelings regarding brand immigrants show the Veblen effect (Leibenstein, 1950).

Second, as a result of the moderating effect of psychological ownership in a lounge, loyal customers' distinct views on brand immigrants and brand tourists were statistically significant. However, in the restaurant, no significant difference between loyal customers' responses of the two types of non-loyal customers were found. The outcomes found that loyal customers viewed brand tourists in a much more positive way than band immigrants in the lounge. However, their responses on non-loyal customers in the restaurant setting were not significantly different. Regarding the interaction effect for switching intention, loyal customers were more likely to switch when they perceived brand immigrants rather than brand tourists in the lounge. However, in the restaurant setting, the differences between loyal customers' responses of non-loyal customers were insignificant.

According to Fig. 2, regarding infringement, brand immigrants in the lounge were the only group to be rated higher than medium level

(4.0) by loyal customers, while they were rated lower than medium level in terms of attitude. Regarding switching intention, only brand tourists in the lounge were rated lower than medium level by loyal customers. With regards to infringement, loyal customers perceive the most infringement when loyal customers see brand immigrants in the lounge. Loyal customers have the most negative attitude toward non-loyal customers when they recognize brand immigrants in the lounge. Finally, loyal customers are more likely to have the intention to switch hotel when they see immigrants in both lounge and restaurant and tourists in the restaurant. Interestingly, loyal customers have less intention to switch when they see brand tourists in lounge. Therefore, it can be interpreted that loyal customers in luxury hotels are likely to have negative emotions regarding non-loyal customers of either type who enter this area thanks to promotions by an affiliated credit card companies.

5.2. Implications

This study provides several theoretical implications to the hospitality brand marketing literature and some managerial contributions to the luxury consumer market in the hospitality industry. First, the study illustrates the efficiency of its proposed framework in addressing some gaps in the literature and discussing the development of the proposed model. This study expanded research on the brand tourism effect by targeting customers in the luxury hotel industry. In addition, unlike the original study (Bellezza & Keinan, 2014) which focused on brand extension strategy, this study has examined conflicts between loyal customers and non-loyal customers applying diverse emotions (i.e., anger, disappointment, and pride) that consumers generally perceive. The results could account for non-loyal customers' (i.e., brand tourists and brand immigrants) conspicuous behaviors. In addition, since this study adopted the experimental design by presenting four elaborate scenarios, the result was able to theoretically explain the 'brand tourism effect' which could be shown in the luxury hotel industry. Second, this study also successfully revealed the moderating effect of psychological ownership on the brand tourism effect. This is meaningful in that a level of psychological ownership is measured by two different locations in hotel setting (i.e., lounge and restaurant) instead of high- or low-level of psychological ownership (Peng, 2013). This research would provide a stepping stone for future scholars who desire to expand the brand tourism effect by investigating diverse customer experiences particularly in luxury hospitality markets. It also provides new insights into the psychological mechanism, known as psychological ownership, by examining perceptions about brand customers in different context.

Third, since the outcome implies that loyal customers are likely to show negative emotions more clearly than positive emotions, frontline employees should make more of an effort to prevent loyal customers' responses of a certain situation as being unfair. Based on this result, we suggest that non-loyal customers' accessible benefits should be limited to prevent conflict between loyal customers and other customers. Specifically, it would be better if the benefits to non-loyal customers were provided at a place where loyal and non-loyal customers do not come face to face, such as in-room gifts or celebrations. If the hotel would like to provide some benefit to the non-loyal customers, it should not be at the expense of loyal customers. It would help hotel marketers to reduce loyal customers' negativity. Another possible suggestion is that if a hotel want to provide benefits to non-loyal customers, it would be better to give it to returning customers rather than to first time visitor. Fourth, this study examined the effect of psychological ownership of a background that can be divided into two different areas. Luxury hotel executives could alleviate the effects of brand immigration by strategically increasing the perceived separation between loyal customers and non-loyal customers. Specifically, they should provide loyal customers with at least one place which can only be accessed by loyal customers. The results of this study reveal that loyal customers' responses of infringement by non-loyal customers is the strongest predictor of their intention to switch hotel, out of the three predictors including infringement, and attitude. Therefore, in luxury hotels, at least one amenity that is reserved for loyal customers should be provided, which could reduce the conflict between loyal customers and non-loyal customers. If the hotel still wishes to provide amenities to hotel members, a lower level of amenity could be made available to all guests.

Arising from this strategy, hotel executives could create a situation in which brand immigrants are more deserving of acceptance into the in-group community. In recent times, some hotels provide guest-only amenities, and they have limited public access spaces that do not include exclusive areas such as roof-top bars and pools. For example, Hotel Emma in San Antonio has a large volume of library where only hotel guests can be accessed with a cardkey. The Roney, a historical hotel in Chicago, provides a new concept rooftop bar and there are specific times of day when only hotel guests can access this space. In this way, hotel marketers might attract more brand immigrants without causing negativity on the part of loyal customers by creating a clear distinction between areas available to loyal and non-loyal customers.

5.3. Limitation and future studies

In this study, some limitations were identified suggesting that a number of future studies should be conducted. The hypotheses proposed in this research were tested with potential guests of luxury hotels in a U.S. based population. Thus, the random sampling method used in this study might not represent the experiences of the U.S. population as a whole. In addition, according to many prior studies, interpersonal relationships in different cultures have an impact on consumers' purchasing behavior and normative influences (Kastanakis & Balabanis, 2012; Urien & Kilbourne, 2011). Therefore, to enable generalizability, future studies should involve broader cultures, with various sample groups collected from diverse countries in western culture and eastern culture. This study has not attempted to explain occurrences in a national population. Hence, future studies should continue to search for socio-demographic and psychographic differences, investigating the generalizability of this study's results. Finally, even though this study successfully manipulated the participants through the scenarios, the future studies may directly recruit actual hotel loyal customers by measuring their frequency of hotel stays, the amount of spending, and the types of memberships.

Author contributions

Seunghwan Lee: Conceptualization, Methodology, Data collection and analysis, writing original draft preparation.

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Vitae.

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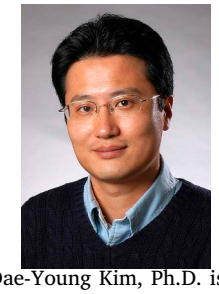

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Appendix A. SCENARIO 1 - HOTEL DESCRIPTION

ABC hotel, a luxury segment of the M International, is one of the top high-end hotels. Similar to other hotels, this hotel brand provides access to a fancy executive club lounge to the limited number of loyalty membership customers and hotel guests who stay in a high-level room such as a suite. Recently, however, this hotel company has been providing access to the club lounge to other guests who are not staying in a high-level room nor are they loyalty members. This can be happening because the hotel has links to other businesses such as credit card companies or it promotes package deals that include access to the club lounge.

Imagine Emily, who is not a loyalty member of this hotel, but is visiting this hotel on vacation. During her stay, since her credit card company provides, as a benefit, access to the club lounge of the ABC hotel, she was able to enjoy herself at a member-exclusive club lounge. Since this hotel has offered access to the club lounge to more of the general guests, this limited-access area looked crowded.

(Scenario 1–1) *Brand immigrant*. Even though Emily cannot afford to use this lounge as an eligible hotel loyalty member, she thinks that she can be a part of the community of ABC members and consider herself a part of the ABC hotel customer group. In this situation, she thinks that her use of this lounge will allow her to show that she is a customer of this hotel brand.

(Scenario 1–2) *Brand tourist*. Since Emily cannot afford to use this lounge as an eligible hotel loyalty member, she thinks that she does not belong to the high-level loyalty membership of the ABC hotel, but she wants to show her admiration for the ABC hotel. In this situation, her use of this lounge will allow her to show that she is an admirer of this hotel brand.

SCENARIO 2 - HOTEL DESCRIPTION.

The XYZ hotel is one of the top high-end hotels globally. Imagine Emily, who is traveling to New York City and goes to an Italian restaurant in the XYZ hotel to have lunch, because she has received a free, one-time meal coupon provided by her credit card company.

(Scenario 2–1) *Brand immigrant*. After she has lunch, she uploads her photos of her experience with the food in the restaurant on social media (e.g., Facebook or Instagram), with a hotel logo and a hashtag of #XYZ. Even though Emily cannot afford to stay at the XYZ, she thinks that she can be a part of the community of XYZ members and considers herself a part of the XYZ brand. She also thinks that this lunch at the restaurant in the XYZ will allow her to show that she is a customer of this hotel brand.

(Scenario 2–2) *Brand tourist*. After she has lunch, she uploads her photos of her experience with the food in the restaurant on social media (e.g., Facebook or Instagram). Since Emily cannot afford to stay at the XYZ, she thinks that she does not belong to the high-level membership of the XYZ, but she still wants to show her admiration for the XYZ brand. This lunch at the restaurant in XYZ will allow her to show that she is a fan of this hotel brand.

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